UCONN 4-H RECORD KEEPING
Setting Goals
A goal without a plan is just a dream
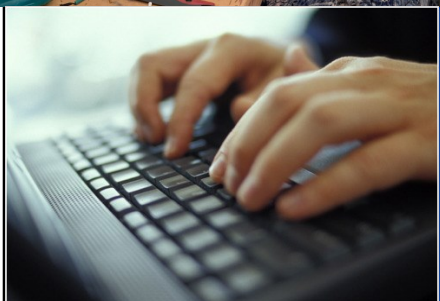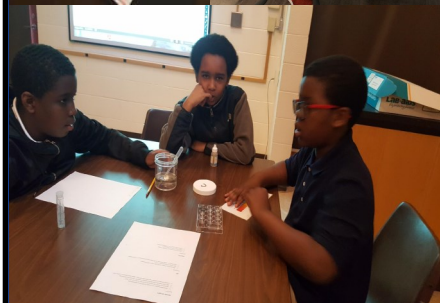
What is a Goal?

A goal is a road map to help you plan how to achieve or accomplish what you desire. In 4-H, setting a goal is simply deciding what you want to learn and do, and then determining the steps you need to accomplish your goal.

Why are Goals Important?

Learning to set goals and analyze your progress is a critical life skill. People who set and achieve their goals are happier, more motivated and confident!

- Goals help you think about what you want to do within the project
- area.
- Your written goals will help you keep track of where you are going and how you are going to get there.
- You will also be able to see your progress as you "check off" your steps to achieve your goal!
- To help you accomplish your project goals, it is important for you to set your goals at the start of the 4-H year. Be sure to include the steps and learning experiences needed to achieve your goals.
- Goals often change throughout the year. That's okay! Not everything we plan turns out the way we had planned it. Just write why your goals changed and set new goals for the next year.
- Goals should become more challenging each project year.

What are the Characteristics of a Good Goal?

- Goals have three parts.
- the action - how will you get to our goal
- the results - what and where you will do your goal
- the timetable - when will it be done?

Good goals are also SMART. SMART stands for specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound.

- Specific — Clear
- Measurable — Able to be measured
- Attainable — Achievable
- Realistic — A practical idea of what can be achieved
- Time-bound — Set to a specific due date

The goal, "I want to volunteer at least 25 hours at a local nursing home between October 1 and April 30." This is an example of a SMART goal because it is specific. There is no doubt of their intention. It is measurable because the 4-Her can measure if they actually did the volunteering hours or not. It is achievable as long as they stay on course and prepare for it. The 4-Her also set a designated time frame to complete this goal.

UCONN
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, HEALTH AND NATURAL RESOURCES

EXTENSION

Control Test

Goals should pass the control test. What is the control test? It simply tests if YOU have control over what you want to do. You have control over a goal such as "I will learn to make a nutritious snack." If the action in the goal is what someone else will do, it fails the control test. The goal statement, "I will have a high point horse at the County Fair" does not pass the control test because the judge provides the action that decides what horse will be high point.

Sample Goals

	Action	Result	time
1. I want to	train my 4-H goat	to lead	by the Fair
2. I want to	win my division	at the County Public Speaking Contest	in Feb
3. I want to	earn a blue ribbon	on my photo	at the Fair
4. I want to	make a poster	where? when?	by what time?
5. I want to	learn how to make three sewing stitches	and display them	at CT 4-H Expressive Arts Day
6. I want to	make	family treat	by what time
7. I want to	train	my dog to stay for 1 minute with me at least 10 feet away	by July 14

Goal Number	Control Test
1	pass
2	Fail (you have no control over who will win)
3	Fail (you have no control over placings)
4	Pass, but not a SMART goal
5	pass
6	Pass, but not a SMART goal
7	pass

Not Sure What to Choose as a Goal?

- Knowledge goals – things you want to learn
- Skill goals -- things you want to raise, make, and/or do.
- Safety goals -- safety practices you need to learn/develop in your project.
- Leadership goals -- things you want to do and teach others.
- Citizenship goals -- things you want to do for others.